



info·bits

City of Torrance

fall•2013



Torrance Library — *Learn - Lead - Live* The Torrance Library Celebrates 100 Years

Long gone are the days of straight backed chairs at heavy library tables waiting in solemn, musty, book filled halls supervised by gray haired ladies glaring over their reading glasses, an index finger held to their lips in the public library. Today's libraries have become vibrant and lively community centers where people of all ages and from every walk of life come to learn, discover, research, share and develop new ideas. Trained professionals possessing seemingly infinite resources and knowledge of advanced internet search techniques, help library patrons locate information on nearly any subject.

Despite predictions that electronic books, online magazines, newspapers, search engines and encyclopedias would make physical books and libraries obsolete, library visits to the country's 16,700 libraries were up by 24 percent in the first decade of the new millennium. Torrance City Librarian, Hillary Theyer and her staff are working hard to stay at the front of the technological pack. "We are following the technical upgrades in all branches that began in 2009 to provide modern wiring infrastructure and equipment with programs that provide online services to the public through their computers and mobile devices." The 'Friends of the Library' organization has been very supportive in the effort providing funding for the initial cost of the new library application and related programs.

Dana Vinke, Principal Librarian of Operations, is responsible for finding much of the new technology and implementing it in concert with the City's Information Technology Department.



Dana Vinke (center front) and CIT team, left to right, Eric Ngo, Michael Pan, Becky Tortorice, Ryan Lee, Frank Mekrut, William Wang, Young Woo, Stuart Yamashiro, and Pam Barton.

A recently introduced mobile application gives patrons access to the library catalog and calendar of events as well as addresses and directions to all the locations, their account information and the option to contact a librarian in real time. Using the app, one can browse, check out, reserve and download eBooks. Hopefully, magazines and periodicals will also become available electronically. "The industry is leery of the online market because of the trouble the music industry has had with copyright infringements but it will happen," said Vinke. "We are in an interesting position as we have adopted a lot of new technology in the last few years but books are still popular and not going away anytime soon," he continued. The eBooks program launched at the beginning of 2013 has proven to be a big hit with about 40 percent of the one thousand titles available checked out in recent months.

Online homework help is another service to the community that has received rave reviews. Students need only their library card to access experienced, well qualified tutors in a variety of subjects who will take them step by step to the correct answers.

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Health & Benefits Fair

New Wellness Features!

This year's Health and Benefits Fair took place on October 2nd in the Cultural Arts Center. Employees lined up for flu shots and blood tests but the longest line was for the newest health scan offering an ultrasound of the carotid artery. Green Hills Memorial made its debut as well as a new body fat measurement station. The Toyota Meeting Hall was decorated for Halloween and the event's coordinator, HR's Lina Dominguez, put on another purrrrfect event in her kitty-cat costume. There were games and prizes to be won, kettle corn and fresh produce from the Farmer's Market and lots of information for employees on all the benefits of being a City employee.



Gear Up Graduation

Torrance University celebrated the graduates' completion of GEAR UP, the City's supervision development and training program. The graduation program featured a guest speaker, Mike Grimshaw, Co-Founder of the South Bay Entrepreneurial Center presenting on the topic of leadership lessons learned the hard way...from a veteran entrepreneur. City Manager, LeRoy J. Jackson, and Mary K. Giordano, Assistant City Manager joined the line of speakers sharing their insights on the impacts that supervisors and leaders have on the organization, employees, and our community.

The goals of Torrance University's GEAR UP program are to teach effective supervision concepts, skills, and techniques, and to provide opportunities to build relationships with other supervisors within the City. The graduation ceremony recognized the accomplishments of two distinct programs. One track was designed for aspiring supervisors to teach leadership concepts and the other track is for current supervisors to learn the concepts and the City's specific procedures to apply the skills and techniques in practice.

Completing this training program is the first step in the participants' career development in first line leaders for our organization and creating a pipeline of effective supervisors. The Aspiring Supervisors track is a 22 hour program that teaches the fundamentals of effective supervision, and is appropriate for those who are not currently in a supervisory role. The Current Supervisors track is a 40 hour program that teaches concepts of effective leadership, and the procedures used here at Torrance related to being a supervisor. The 2013 Current Supervisor graduates include:



Sheila Abalayan, Aaron Cortado, Miguel Garcia, Patti Goldenson, Marco Gonzalez, James Gorbin, Gia Inferrera, Laura Mapes, Tony Mullikin, Scott Ogasawara, Rebecca Poirier, Allison Saufua, Mike Simoneau, Scott Villalva, Cheryl Williams. The 2013 Aspiring Supervisor graduates include: Andrew Darlak, Mark Decrescenzo, Terriann Ferren, Hector Flores, James Gardner, Scott Gray, Samantha Guerrero, Christopher Lehr, Delois McCary, Brian McNamara, Elizabeth Pose, Cynthia Rosell, Ronald Schultz, Jose Urtez, Fareed Ahmad, Helen Eng, Joe Enzmann, Dennis Faro, Richard Kazandjian, Oscar Martinez, Michael Pan, Nina Schroeder, Gina Semana-Ake, Kimberly Thompson, Annie Toledo, Liza Vela, Wendy Wu.

Torrance University anticipates registration will open this fall for employees who are interested in participating in next year's classes that begins in Winter 2014. For more information, please visit <http://ten.torrnet.com/4416.htm#> or contact Training Coordinator, Lindy Hedde at (310) 618-2827 or LHedde@TorranceCA.Gov.



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An electronic service, eNotify allows anyone to receive updates on certain web pages. You can subscribe to Info-Bits and other city information updates by registering online at <http://www.torranceca.gov/20726.htm>. Once you have registered, you can choose from a menu of update notifications for various city web pages, including Info-Bits. Check the boxes to choose the information you would like to monitor and you will be e-mailed when the web pages are updated. Here is the process to sign up:

- Log in
- Click e-notify
- Click webpage subscription
- Under Human Resources is Retiree Resources
- Check Retiree Resources box
- Click Save on bottom of page
- A message on top of page will say “Database updated successfully”
- Exit or log out

To view current Info-Bits and archives go to:
<http://www.torranceca.gov/16042.htm>

New Hires

City Attorney
Jeanne-Marie Litvin
Deputy City Attorney I

City Manager
Neyda Arechiga
Secretary
Brianna King
Personnel Technician

City Treasurer
Kami Lindsey
Account Clerk

Community Development
Nicholaus Mueller
Engineering Technician III
Alfredo Nuno
Building Inspector

Community Services
Joyce Chan
Farmers’ Market Manager

General Services
Timothy Medina
Mark Norton
Air Conditioning/Heat Technician

Daniel Creal
Adrian Nassif
Thomas Woolley
Building Maintainer

Steven Ihori
Senior Mechanic

Police
Christina Bazzo
Cristina Pino
Forensic ID Specialist

Jacob Castner
Kevin Crisfield
Mark Cuny
Steven Masone
Jill Miller (1 Year Lat. Credit)
Bryan Ridenour
Jason Reed
Andrew Stevens
Police Officer cont.

Tracey Gowdy
Stacey Harper
Records Technician

Erika Havrilchak
Enrique Villegas
Police Services Officer

Public Works
Keron Crawford
Engineering Technician III

Promotions

City Attorney
Gillian Studwell
Deputy City Attorney II
Della Thompson-Bell
Deputy City Attorney III

City Manager
Edward Wilson
Cable TV Production Supervisor

Community Services
Christopher Gooch
Library Assistant II

Fire
Nick Facer
Fire Engineer

Paul Masotto
Fire Captain

Public Works
Marco Carranza
Water Service Tech II

Retirees

Name	Title	Retirement Date	Years of Service
William Johnson	Air Condition/Heat Technician	09/05/2013	19 years
Richard Laub	Lead Maintenance Worker	09/14/2013	25 years
Howard Schneider	Fire Captain	07/25/2013	30 years

Corrections

We apologize for the mis-prints in Summer 2013 Info-Bits

Promotions
Community Services
Cyndy Rosell
Sr. Administrative Assistant

New Hires
Finance
Jeffrey Neu
Staff Assistant

Quick Tips for Reducing Holiday Stress

The holidays can be a joyful time, offering a chance to reconnect with friends and family. But they can also be stressful. You may feel pressure to buy and give gifts. Maybe you are worried about money. The holidays can also be hectic. There never seems to be enough time to get things done. Think about the kinds of events that trigger stress for you during the holidays. Then you can focus on one or two things you can do that will help the most to reduce stress. Here are some ideas:

Preparing for the holidays

- Know your spending limit. Lack of money is one of the biggest causes of stress during the holiday season. This year, set a budget, and don’t spend more than you’ve planned.
- Give something personal. You can show love and caring with any gift that is meaningful and personal. Make a phone call or write a note and share your feelings.
- Get organized. Make lists or use an appointment book to keep track of tasks to do and events to attend.
- Share the tasks. You don’t have to do everything yourself. Share your “to do” list with others.
- Learn to say no. It’s okay to say “no” to events that aren’t important to you. This will give you more time to say “yes” to events that you do want to attend.
- Be realistic. Try not to put pressure on yourself to create the perfect holiday for your family. Focus instead on the traditions that make the holidays special for you.

You may not be able to avoid stressful situations during the holidays. But you can plan to respond to them in a healthy way.

- Take breaks from group activities. Meditate, or do some relaxation breathing. Go for a short walk.
- Keep a regular sleep, meal, and exercise schedule. Limit your alcohol. Taking care of yourself will help you deal with stressful situations during the holidays.
- Get support if you need it. Holidays can sometimes trigger depression. Talk with your doctor about counseling and medicine for depression.

Courtesy Kaiser Permanente

Torrance Library Celebrates 100 Years

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In honor of the library's centennial being celebrated this year, new library cards were designed and are being issued with special colors added for this year only. The new cards are black with color tones from the mobile application design and were the brainchild of Zoe Yun, Library Assistant II. The new card adds a keychain size to the original wallet size, a frequent patron request. Nearly 12 thousand new format cards have been issued since their introduction in December of 2012.

Zoe Yun credits Central Services Graphic Artist, Allen Teng for the design of the card and the library's centennial logo.



Librarian, Evan Coates, attended a grant writing seminar last spring and immediately began to work on a concept he had for enlisting area high school students into a volunteer program that will help older citizens learn how to use their mobile phones and tablets. In July, he won a grant from the state under the Library Services and Technology Act, combined with support from the Friends of the Library to launch the training program for Teen Tech-Xperts in mid-October. "The students commit to twenty hours of volunteer service that counts for their community service requirements at school, the adults get the help of a trained teen to help them learn how to use their mobile devices, it's a win-win," said Coates.



Heather Firchow, Senior Librarian in Youth Services, runs three Storytime sessions each week, two geared for toddlers and one for babies. The half hour sessions include story reading, interactive songs and activities for the little ones. Firchow recently began using an ipad to post and play songs and lyrics, show book title covers and other information that help run the session more smoothly and free her to move about the room more to connect with her audience. The ipad is also used in the Pajama-Rama program on Wednesday evenings. A Wii is added for the teen and 'tween' programs where they will also watch movies and compete in an Iron Chef contest. "We want the young people to feel comfortable to come here for information and fun," said Firchow. Youth programs have increased in attendance by 300 percent in the last few years.

In the works is an ipad lending program where patrons will be able to check out an ipad for an hour inside the library, "We don't want to leave anyone behind," says Theyer. "Of course, we couldn't have made this kind of progress without the help of many other departments in the City." As the first City division to pioneer a presence on Facebook and later, an online application, the library has depended on assistance from the City Attorney's Office, Central Services and Information Technology. The possibilities for additional innovations in information technology are limitless, "I entrust my quality team to get the job done," said Theyer, "Librarians are professionals, and they bring their brains to the table for thoughtful discussions. We stay in touch with our industry for new ideas. It is an exciting time."

Share your collection with the Community



Katy Geissert Civic Center Library Display Case

The library is much more than a place to check out books. If you have a collection you would like to display at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library, you can contact our display coordinator at 310-618-5945 or fill out this online form: <http://goo.gl/oFqPXJ>. The exhibits change from month to month.

Torrance Trivia

By Michael George

Summer 2013 Question:

In the early 1960s, these relics of a bygone era came crashing down. Once dotting the city, these structures defined the “Modern Industrial City” from the 1920s through the 1960s. Little missed today, the structure meant progress and helped spur the development of the city through the depression. What was this iconic Torrance Structure?

ANSWER – Oil Derricks!

Correct Responders:

Daniel Redman, Lea Reis, Steven Cooper, Donna Baranowski, Joe Huld, Diane Megerdichian, Lubna Arikat, Megan Flanders, Yolanda Gomez, Melanie Penton, Gordon Jeffers, Paula Kozinski, Laurie Anderson, Bill Kamimura, Daniel Gruezo, Hillary Theyer, Cheryl Huddle, Lisa Terlazzo. And the winner of the gift certificate is Daniel Gruezo. Contact Myisha Phillips in HR to collect your prize!

New Question:

Which two Torrance Public Libraries are “twins”?

Send your answer to: JanetStancliff3@gmail.com with “Torrance Trivia” in the subject line. A winner will be chosen through random drawing.

Moments in Torrance History

By Michael George

Isabel Henderson Branch Library

The Henderson Branch Library is named after Isabel Henderson, the first Torrance Librarian. Mrs. Henderson, a cousin of city founder Jared Sidney Torrance, opened the first library from her front parlor in 1913. Mr. Torrance “seeing the need for some social and cultural outlets in the infant city, urged her [Mrs. Henderson] to make her home here.” Mrs. Henderson was a well traveled, educated woman. She was a charter member of the Torrance Women’s Club and organizer of the City’s WWI Red Cross volunteers.

Mrs. Henderson served as city librarian for 22 years. On her retirement, her daughter, Mrs. Dorothy Jamieson took over as city librarian. Coincidentally, Mrs. Jamieson also served

for 22 years. Mrs. Henderson died in 1936, the year the first purpose built Torrance Library (now the home of the Torrance Historic Society) was built. At the dedication of that building, Los Angeles County Librarian, Helen E. Vogelsson said Mrs. Henderson was “an ardent individualist, a keen observer of the times, an astute world traveler, Mrs. Henderson gave unsparingly of her talents to broaden Torrance people’s views. As our Librarian from the beginning of Torrance she has inspired many people to richer and happier lives through her advice and admonition in the reading of books.”